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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BASRAH 000086

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 9/23/2017
TAGS: [IR](#) [IZ](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [PTER](#)
SUBJECT: BASRAH POLICE CHIEF ON IRAN & SECURITY

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CLASSIFIED BY: Howell Howard, A/Director, Regional Embassy
Office - Basrah, Department of State.
REASON: 1.4 (a), (b), (d)

11. (C) Summary: Basrah Police Chief, Major General Jalil Khalaf Shueil, told Regional Embassy Officers September 18 that Iran is training a Hezbollah-like force in reaction to rumors of a U.S. deployment to Basrah following a British withdrawal. Jalil expressed concern that Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki only got information on the South through Dawa party contacts and was unaware of any security improvement efforts. Jalil described his relations with Basrah's security chief, General Mohan Hafith Fahad, as good, but the two disagree on the path for improving security. Mohan favors political accommodations with the militias; Jalil wants to actively confront law-breakers. Jalil also doubted the effectiveness of Mohan's Honor Document calling for militias to disarm. He called the police ineffective due to militia infiltration, but described his plan to purge bad officers and create a hand picked force. End summary.

IRANIAN TRAINING FOR PROXY WAR IN BASRAH

12. (C) Jalil informed us September 18 that Iran is reacting to rumors of U.S. forces deploying to Basrah, when the British withdraw, by training a Hezbollah-like force to fight a proxy war. The training is being held in Iran from September 2 to November 2 for 80-100 snipers and 300-350 persons on EFP/IEDs, IDF weapons, as well as how to hit helicopters with small arms and RPG fire. It is suspected that Iranian influenced Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM) members are receiving the training. Jalil commented that Iran's concerns over U.S. troops in southern Iraq and Tehran's interest in spreading its influence will trump Maliki's request that Iran stop aiding militia's during his recent visit to Tehran.

JALIL ON MOHAN'S SECURITY PLAN & HONOR DOCUMENT

13. (C) Jalil said that he greatly respected Mohan, but they are at odds on how to solve security problems. Jalil opined that Mohan is acting more like a politician than a general by being "soft on the militias" and accommodating them, especially JAM. Jalil prefers using the tribes to counter-balance JAM and some of the more militant political parties.

14. (C) Jalil is also skeptical of Mohan's "Honor Document"

saying it would achieve little. The document included provisions that militias would give up medium to heavy weapons by the end of September; political parties would stop interfering in security matters; security forces would prosecute violations of the law, protect political offices, and prohibit the use of police vehicles for partisan political purposes. Basrah's political parties agreed to the document on August 31 and then signed it September 7. Jalil noted there was no Sadrism representative at the signing and doubts the document will make a difference, since JAM is unwilling to disarm until the Coalition leaves Iraq.

MOHAN'S EYE ON THE PRIZE

15. (C) According to Jalil, Mohan has political aspirations and now hopes to become Minister of the Interior. Jalil confirmed rumors that Mohan had been seeking either the Chief of Staff or MOD advisor roles, but would have had difficulty given the personal animosity of Chief of Staff LTG Babakir Zebari, Deputy Chief of Staff LTG Nasir al-Abadi, and Minister of Defense Abd al-Qadir al-Mufriji.

JALIL'S PLANNED POLICE REFORM

16. (C) Jalil told us he and Mohan met Maliki last week, but he expressed frustration that Maliki was unfamiliar with their efforts to improve Basrah's security. While Maliki expressed concern about the south in national security meetings, Maliki was only getting the Dawa Party perspective. Jalil was also surprised that MNF-I and MNC-I did not want to meet him to discuss Basrah's security.

17. (C) The Iraqi Police (IP) in Basrah, Jalil said, is currently incapable of restoring order. IP units are entirely infiltrated by the militias; hundreds of IP vehicles, gas, and weapons are used to commit crimes; officers are afraid to make arrests; and

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there are too many departments to control. "The police are an increasing threat to society," he assessed.

18. (C) Jalil described his plan to reform the police starting with the formation of two "Emergency Brigades" totaling 5,000 officers. The units would be hand picked from the 15,000 existing officers and recruited from outside the four southern provinces. Unburdened by the influence of local militias and heavily equipped like the existing Tactical Support Units, the Emergency Brigades would be capable of confronting the militias. The remaining 10,000 officers would be given routine police duties or transferred to other areas. He also intends to send 1,000 officers - presumably the worst ones - to Baghdad soon.

18. (C) Jalil said he was glad to see the arrival of the 6/2 National Police Brigade, and though he had not deployed them yet, he would in the near future to make some key arrests. The 6/2 BDE would be held in Basrah until he was finished forming the Emergency Brigades.

19. (C) Comment: Several reasons may account for Jalil's more aggressive approach than Mohan: Jalil probably feels emboldened by the arrival of the National Police Brigade and 2/3/9 (IA) BN armor support; Jalil has survived several recent attempts on his life; his nephew, a police captain, was assassinated; and several of his high-ranked subordinates have also been wounded or killed in assassination attempts over the last two weeks. It is likely those attempts are in reaction to his firing 112 National Information and Investigations Agency officers. We believe that Jalil is a competent and dedicated Police Chief, but is limited in affecting change by a corrupt police force and Mohan's accommodation with JAM. End Comment.

HOWARD